

Public submission

MADELEINE FAUGHT

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Organisation: *Conservation Ecologists Association*

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Supporting materials uploaded: *Attached overleaf*

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Conservation Ecologists Association



The Conservation Ecologists Association (CEA) is a northern NSW based group of professional ecologists, biologists and environmental consultants dedicated to securing the most appropriate conservation management of the north coast's natural biodiversity and supporting ecosystems.

We appreciate the opportunity to make a submission to the Forestry Industry Review.

Members of CEA have extensive experience and a detailed knowledge of the history of and current status of NSW State Forests with many of us having worked as ecologists in these forest communities over the past 50 years.

We have serious concerns relating to the current status and future ecological sustainability of NSW State forests and the native flora and fauna that are dependent on them. We are particularly outraged by the conversion of structurally diverse forests to even-aged stands and the resulting loss of species biodiversity, rainforest refugia, old growth attributes and the effect this then has on native species, e.g. hollow dependant fauna such as the Greater Glider and Yellow-bellied Glider.

The current levels of logging in native forests are not sustainable and rely on government support and subsidies. Private native forest logging should be discontinued with compensation where required or acquisition if preferred by landholders.

Our forest ecosystems are already impacted by the effects of rapid climate change (increased fire, flood and cyclone damage), bell miner related dieback, impacts from myrtle rust and the likelihood that the bird flu will impact greatly on our native fauna, including mammals. Logging and forest destruction releases large amounts of carbon. Modification of the forest structure facilitates bell miner attack and the invasion of myrtle rust spores and increases fire risk.

Our old growth and mature forests are irreplaceable. They are of exceptional cultural significance to Indigenous Australians. They lock up carbon. They provide valuable refugia for flora and fauna species. They are valuable for tourism, job creation and recreation.

We no longer require our native forests for timber production. Investing in hardwood plantations on already cleared land should supply future timber products in addition to storing carbon. We urge the Forestry Industry Action Panel to recommend timber extraction is prohibited in NSW state forests and restoration of degraded areas is undertaken immediately.

We urge the panel to recommend the immediate cessation of timber removal from NSW State Forests and the conversion of these areas into National Park estate.